

486 ÉMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND  
REFORMER

tion of dignity next May when she will receive her guests. All this between ourselves, this letter is absolutely for you alone. You would cause me the greatest grief by the slightest indiscretion, . . . Thanks for the English newspapers you have sent. I have just read them with keen interest. But all that does not frighten me much."<sup>1</sup>

Five days later the unhappy Dreyfus accepted the pardon offered him by President Loubet, and Zola then addressed a beautiful, pathetic letter to the poor martyr's wife, in which, lie gave her the assurance that his friends and himself would continue the battle until both her husband and France should be fully rehabilitated.<sup>2</sup>

In October "Fécondité" was published as a volume, and dealing as it did with a problem of national importance, the decline in the birth-rate and the massacre of infantile life in France, it attracted widespread attention. It was a very outspoken book, but a necessary one, and its exposure of the vices of married life was one to be applied to other countries besides France. But Vizetelly, who remembered the past and knew that Pecksniffs and Podsnaps still flourished in England, felt that the national cant would not suffer a plain statement of the truth. Some difficulty occurred therefore with respect to the translation of "Fécondité," the English version of which had to be considerably curtailed. In France the sale of the original work was assisted by the

fact that after all the abominations of the Affair  
a certain  
number of Zola's former admirers were now  
gradually re-  
turning to Mm.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Afac-simile* of the above letter is given, with the present volume.

<sup>2</sup> : "La Verite en Marche," p. 163 *et seq.*

<sup>8</sup> "Fecondite." Paris, Fasquelle, 1899, 18mo, 751 pages.  
Some copies  
on special papers; a few in two vols. 8vo.' Ninety-fourth,  
thousand in 1901.